

Overview of comments by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority and responses by line ministries on the Sixth Report on Implementation of the Action Plan for the Realization of Rights of National Minorities

Chapter I - Personal status position

Activity: 1.4. Improving the Special Voters Registry (SVR) of national minorities in terms of upgrading and enhancing the existing SVR application, in order to provide more accurate updating of data while ensuring confidentiality of the same

deadline: IV quarter of 2015

Comment by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority:

An update of the report with information on the current stage of work on upgrading the SVR and SVL application is requested, as well as an information about the expected start of a new application.

Response by the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government:

A test version of the new SVR application has been developed for the training needs of the authorized SVR officers within the local self-government units. The test version of the SVR application has the basic functionalities set, which are needed for conducting the training. In the forthcoming period, the Ministry will continue to work on the incorporation of other functionalities within the SVR application, in regards to the implementation of the selection procedure for members of national councils. The new SVR application will be released into operational work in early July 2018 at the latest.

Activity: 1.5. The training of employees in local self-government units which deal with the Special Voters Registry of the national minorities as entrusted work, in order to update the data, and the protection of this data as particularly sensitive data, based on regulations on personal data protection

deadline: IV quarter of 2016

Comment by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority:

It is requested from the responsible persons within the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government to supplement their report with their estimation of:

- the period within which these training sessions are expected to be held;
- the expected duration of training sessions;
- the expected number of employees engaged in LSU training sessions;
- the duration of the period from the completion of the training to the conclusion of Special Voters Registry prior to the elections in the second half of 2018, within which

the trained employees can perform actions on updating the SVR.

Response by the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government:

The Ministry has prepared a Draft Training Plan for all officers authorized for keeping the SVR within local self-government units and their Heads, over 200 authorized officers and the same number of Heads of LSUs. The plan is to conduct training sessions for the test version of the SVR application in the second half of May and early June 2018.

In accordance with the Law on National Councils of National Minorities, the local self-government units, which keep the Special Voters Registry as an entrusted work, regularly update the SVR up to its conclusion.

Chapter III – Area of culture and media

Activity: 3.4. To ensure sufficient and stable funding that guarantees the sustainability of the media in languages of national minorities through:

- *Improvement of by-laws related to project co-financing, especially in regards to the role of National Councils of National Minorities, which ensures stable and continuous financing of media content production of importance to the members of national minorities,*
- *Programme financing of media content whose founders/publishers are National Councils of National Minorities*
- *Continued budgetary support to the media in ownership of National Councils of National Minorities;*
- *Exclusion of media owned by national councils from the privatization, in accordance with the Law on Public Information and Media;*
- *Public call for the co-financing of media content in languages of national minorities, with full respect for the opinion of the national councils on the manner of allocation of funds;*
- *Ensuring co-financing of media in languages of national minorities;*
- *Ensuring the participation of national minority councils in the work of the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media based on clear criteria for selection.*
- *link with AP for CH 23, activity 3.8.1.4.*

deadline: continuously

Comment by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority:

The report by the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media is missing, please request it.

Response: The Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media has submitted their report. In the Report is stated that the situation remains unchanged compared to the previous period in terms of implementation of the activity.

Activity: 3.5. Raising public awareness about the rights of national minorities and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity through by supporting production of media content in order to equal rights, and further strengthening the understanding of the culture of national minorities as an integral part of the society as a whole.

- link with AP for CH 23, activity 3.8.1.5.

deadline: continuously, through the organization of annual competitions

Comment by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority:

The Report by the Public Broadcasting Services is missing, please request it.

The Ministry of Culture and Information is asked to supplement, i.e. clarify their report, preferably by measurable facts.

Response: Public Broadcasting Services have submitted their reports.

In the Reports, it is stated that the situation remains unchanged compared to the previous period in terms of implementation of the activity.

Response by the Ministry of Culture and Information:

The Ministry announces a Public Call for the co-financing of projects in the field of public information in languages of national minorities, within which it supports the production of media content dedicated not only to preserving the cultural and linguistic identity of national minorities, but also to respecting the cultural and linguistic diversity. Special attention is paid to multicultural and multilingual projects, since such projects contribute to the sensitization of the majority population for cultural and linguistic features of members of national minorities and to the strengthening of understanding of the culture of national minorities.

In the period covered by the Sixth Report on Implementation of the Action Plan for the Realization of Rights of National Minorities in the Republic of Serbia (October - December 2017), the activity was continuously implemented through the implementation of 8 multilingual projects that were co-financed by the Ministry in 2017. The measurable facts relating to these projects can be reported within the Action Plan only at the end of 2018, i.e. when the beneficiaries of the funds submit narrative and financial reports on the realization of projects to the Ministry and when the Ministry, based on these reports, drafts a Report on the implementation of co-financed projects within the competition in the field of public information in languages of national minorities. In that regard, we note that such reports for 2015 and 2016 are available to the public and can be downloaded from <http://www.kultura.gov.rs/lat/konkursi>

In these reports, for each multilingual project, the facts, i.e. the number of texts, shows etc., are given. which have been realized within the projects, but whether this fact is measurable, i.e. whether the impact indicator for Activity 3.5 (Increasing the representation of media coverage related to raising awareness of national minorities and cultural and linguistic

diversity) is fulfilled, is not on the Ministry to assess, nor can it be viewed without complete data from all the holders of this activity.

Chapter V – The Use of language and script

Activity: 5.10. Provision of electronic information, services and documents on the eGovernment Portal in languages of national minorities in local self-government units where those languages are used in official administration.

deadline: continuously, starting from I quarter of 2017

Comment by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority:

In accordance with the reporting methodology, we request to change the status of the activity into: The activity is not implemented.

Response: In the previous quarter, the Office For Information Technology And E-Government has stated that the activity is being implemented continuously. During this quarter, the situation remains unchanged, thus retaining the same status of implementation of the activity.

Chapter VI - Education

Activity: 6.2. Formation of a group within the National Education Council (NEC) dealing with education in languages of national minorities.

deadline: I quarter of 2016

Comment by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority:

Although this activity has already been completed, it is necessary to note that NEC is not functional; hence, the group that deals with education in languages of national minorities is not functional as well. It is therefore necessary to change the status of implementation of this activity.

Response: The activity *Formation of a group within the National Education Council dealing with education in languages of national minorities* has been assessed in the I quarter of 2016, in accordance with the set indicators and timeframe - the activity is fully implemented.

Activity: 6.4. Monitoring the quality of education in minority languages.

deadline: continuously

Comment by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority:

Whether and in what percentage were members of the national minorities educators involved in the training or educators in groups where the educational work is (also) carried in language of the national minority ?

Response by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development:

Training of expert associates and other training sessions are aimed at improving the competencies for respecting diversity and selection of participants is not based on ethnicity. Specifically, the male and female colleagues that are representatives of institutions in which educational work is (also) carried out in language of the national minority have indeed participated in these training sessions.

Activity: 6.12. Strengthening the linguistic capacity and learning of professional terminology for students belonging to national minorities in language of the national minority in order to access the labour market and ensure professional development.

deadline: continuously, starting from I quarter of 2016

Comment by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority:

We welcome the report submitted by the Faculty of Agriculture in Novi Sad. Is it possible to obtain information through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MPN), the Provincial Secretariat and/or the Rectorate of the University of Novi Sad (UNS) on whether other higher education institutions enable consultations in the languages of national minorities (and for which courses)?

Is there institutional support for such activities, or does it depend solely on the good will of individual lecturers?

Response: The UNS Rectorate regularly submit their reports, including the following faculties: Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Philosophy, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, "Mihajlo Pupin" Technical Faculty, Faculty of Education, Teacher Training Faculty, Academy of Arts. For more information, see quarter 2017/2 - the situation remains unchanged.

Response by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development:

According to the Law on Higher Education ("*Official Gazette of the RS*", No. 88/2017) in Article 95 - the Study Language, it is stipulated that the higher education institution organizes and conducts studies in Serbian language, as well as that it can organize the taking of exams and conduct studies, i.e. individual parts of the studies, preparation and defence of final, master and specialist research papers, and PhD thesis, i.e. to conduct a study programme in the language of a national minority and in a foreign language, if such a programme has been accredited as a separate study programme, in accordance with the Statute. In addition to respecting the humanistic and democratic values of national and European traditions and values of cultural heritage and respecting human rights and civil liberties, including the

prohibition of all forms of discrimination, one of the principles of higher education is also the Autonomy. The Autonomy (Article 6) of universities and other higher education institutions implies, in accordance with this Law:

- 1) the right to establish curricula;
- 2) the right to establish rules for studying and enrolment conditions;
- 3) the right to arrange internal organization;
- 4) the right to develop the Statute and to elect management/administration and other bodies, in accordance with this Law;
- 5) the right to elect teachers and associates;
- 6) the right to issue public documents;
- 7) the right to financial independence, in accordance with the Law;
- 8) the right to manage the property, in accordance with the Law;
- 9) the right to decide on acceptance of projects and on the international cooperation.

Bearing in mind the legal provisions, each higher education institution can, primarily, manage the teaching process in accordance with the expressed needs of students and professors, guided by the principle of autonomy, and through verification before the professional bodies of the higher education institution.

The Provincial Secretariat for Higher Education and Scientific Research collects the following data:

- Teaching languages at college of vocational studies and at the faculties of the University of Novi Sad
- Number of students of higher education institutions attending the courses in languages of national minorities
- Taking the entrance examination in languages of national minorities

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, through the *Dositej* Information System, collects data on higher education institutions, including the language in which the study programme is conducted, the number and status of students.

Since consultations are a part of the study programme, that is, the university autonomy, the data on the language in which consultations are conducted is not a part of the data that is being collected.

It should be noted that Article 11 of the Law on Higher Education stipulates that "When teaching in the language of a national minority is carried out in whole or in part within the framework of higher education, in matters of relevance for teaching in the language of a national minority, a representative of the national council of that national minority participates

in the work of the National Council for Higher Education, with participation in decision-making." Article 65 of this Law opens the possibility of participation of student representatives in the work of professional bodies of higher education institutions which decide on issues of interest for realization of teaching, scientific, artistic and research work, i.e. decide on issues related to quality assurance, change of curricula, analysis of the efficiency of studying and determining the number of ECTS credits.

These legal provisions enable the participation of representatives of national councils of national minorities in the National Council for Higher Education, as well as of a student representatives in professional bodies of a higher education institution who, through the representation of the interests of national minorities, can initiate initiatives for improving the quality of teaching.

Activity: 6.13. Optimization of the network of schools and classes where teaching is carried out in minority languages, in accordance with the Education Development Strategy by 2020 and the accompanying Action Plan and the specificities of each local community to:

-establish criteria for the network of preschool institutions, primary and secondary schools, which provide opportunities for people belonging to national minorities to exercise their right to education in their mother tongue;

-define specific criteria for forming classes in minority languages in line with the principle of ensuring the affirmative measures

deadline: IV quarter of 2018

Comment by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority:

Check whether the report contain table titled "List of approved textbooks and teaching materials in Ruthenian language for school year 2017/18" which has been intentionally given with this activity and added to the report, since it is difficult to see the logical link between the activity and the part of the report.

Response: Although there is a specific activity in the Action Plan that relates to textbooks, 6.11. Providing all textbooks and teaching materials envisaged by the textbook plan, which already listed the textbooks that the Vrbas municipality mentioned in their report, the table was given as an integral part of the report submitted by the municipality of Vrbas, in its original form, which states (above the table):

"The Municipality of Vrbas states that the National Council of the Ruthenian National Minority, by its Decision No. 54-24-02-03/13 of 12 March 2013, has declared the Primary School "Svetozar Miletić" from Vrbas and the Primary School "Bratstvo-jedinstvo" from Kucura for educational institutions of special importance for the Ruthenian national minority. Since 71 students are enrolled in 8 classes (1 class per each grade) and attend lectures in Ruthenian language in the Primary School "Bratstvo-jedinstvo" in Kucura, the textbooks

approved by the Pedagogical Institute of Vojvodina are used in accordance with the Law on Textbooks."

LIST OF APPROVED TEXTBOOKS AND TEACHING MATERIALS IN RUTHENIAN LANGUAGE FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2017/18.

	date of approval	name of the textbook/teaching material	language	grade	authors
1.	10.02.2017.	Music culture	Ruthenian language	7 th grade Primary School	Lidija Pašo
2.	31.10.2017.	Audio CD recording with a textbook Music Culture	Ruthenian language	1 st grade, Primary School	Lidija Pašo, Mirko Pregon
3.	14.11.2017.	Alphabet Book with Bukvar	Ruthenian language	1 st grade Primary School	Ksenija Bogdanec, Natalija Zazulak, Melanija Ramač
4.	12.12.2017.	Word by word (worksheets)	Ruthenian language	2 nd grade Primary School	Jakov Kišjuhas, Anamarija Ramač Furman
5.	12.12.2017.	Svet reči (textbook)	Ruthenian language	3 rd grade Primary School	Jakov Kišjuhas, Anamarija Ramač Furman

Activity: 6.18. Establishing cooperation in the field of professional development of teachers in order to:

- ensuring professional development of educational workers in the profession and knowledge of the minority language, by exchange and stay in the country of origin of the national minorities, in accordance with signed agreements

- signing agreements on the recognition of accredited professional development from the countries of origin of national minorities.

deadline: II quarter of 2017

Comment by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority:

In accordance with the reporting methodology, we request to change the status of the activity into: The activity is not implemented.

Response: During this quarter, the situation remains unchanged, thus retain the same status of implementation of the activity. If the status of implementation of the activity has remained unchanged three cycles in a row, status "activity is not implemented" will be applied to the activity.

Activity: 6.19. Establishing cooperation in the field of providing quality textbooks and teaching materials

deadline: II quarter of 2017

Comment by the National Council of the Hungarian National Minority:

In accordance with the reporting methodology, we request to change the status of the activity into: The activity is not implemented.

Response: During this quarter, the situation remains unchanged, thus retain the same status of implementation of the activity. If the status of implementation of the activity has remained unchanged three cycles in a row, status “activity is not implemented” will be applied to the activity.